

REMARKS

Claims 1 through 18 continue to be in the case.

Claims 1 is being twice amended.

Claim 3 is being three times amended.

Claims 4, 5, 6, 7 are being amended.

The Office Action refers to Drawings.

The drawings stand objected to as failing to comply with 37 CFR 1.84(p)(5) because they include the following reference sign(s) not mentioned in the description: Reference character "15" is shown in figure 1 but not mentioned in the specification. Reference characters "14", "16", "17", "18", "19" and "23" are shown in figure 2 but not mentioned in the specification. Correction is required.

Applicant is required to submit a proposed drawing correction in reply to this Office action. However, formal correction of the noted defect can be deferred until the examiner allows the application.

The corrections are made in the drawing according to the Examiner's remarks.

The Office Action refers to the Specification.

This application does not contain an abstract of the disclosure as required by 37 CFR 1.72(b). An abstract on a separate sheet is required.

An ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE is being submitted with this amendment.

The Office Action refers to Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 102.

I. Claims 1-8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being clearly anticipated by Vancura.

Vancura according to the Office Action discloses Gaming Machines with Bonusing. In his game he teaches the playing of a bonus game in a secondary machine adjacent to a primary machine. Vancura's invention substantially teaches the limitations as claimed.

The subject matter of the present invention relates to a slot machine which is incorporated in a network of computing devices. The slot machine of the applicants comprises a first game plane and a second game plane. The rotating bodies can be started up again and again as many times desired up to reaching a maximum winning function within a predetermined time window in the second paying plane. The recited art Vancura teaches neither the object of the present invention nor the method steps forming the basis of the present invention.

The reference Vancura teaches in US-Patent 6,033,307 a game playing apparatus, which is connected. A base game is run at the initial slot machine. If a particular winning combination is reached, the won game payout can be staked at a subordinated second slot machine or, respectively, the bonus win value is played out.

This already points to the basic inherent difference between the present invention and the teaching of Vancura. This is known from the state of the art that a first independent game unit and a second independent game unit are required. The first (initial) game unit and the second subordinated game unit are disposed spacially separated from each other. In order to play out the bonus according to the Vancura reference, the player has to leave his initial game machine and has to transfer to the subordinated game machine.

The reference to column 18, lines 22 to 24 of the Vancura reference teaches only that the first game automat operates like a standard conventional game machine, even though any arbitrary suitable game automat can be employed. A preselected combination

of symbols on a number line of the first game machine delivers a bonus qualification signal for activating a neighboring second bonus game automat.

The Office Action further refers to the Vancura reference, column 17, lines 44 through 54, where it is taught that a game player has the possibility to interact with the course of a game by depressing a stop key. The present run of the circulating bodies can be stopped by actuation of the stop key.

The operation according to the present invention is completely different from the elements and steps of Vancura. The game player can start any number of times as desired with the playing, contrary to the teaching of Vancura. According to experience the game player is furnished with a sufficient time interval . during this time interval, the game player can restart the motion again of the stopped circulating bodies in order to obtain a desirable winning combination.

Applicants urge that the reference Vancura in fact teaches away from the present invention. Vancura teaches to employ a spacially separately disposed machine. A stopping feature is to be furnished on the second machine, which can be actuated by the player.

Applicants respectfully disagree with the statement of the Examiner that a secondary machine and a primary machine disclosed by Vancura (US 6,033,307) are the same gaming machine as a coin actuated entertainment automat or a networked coin actuated entertainment automat with master or slave function disclosed in the present invention.

Vancura (US 6,033,307) teaches a method for playing a bonus game in a secondary slot machine 20 where the secondary slot machine 20 and a primary slot machine 10 are on-top of each other, side-by-side to each other, or near each other whether in the same housing or in separate housings. The primary slot machine 10 and the secondary slot machine 20 are separate gaming machines despite the fact that they may be installed in the same housing. The primary slot machine 10 communicates over

communication path 30 to the secondary slot machine 20 when a bonus qualifying event occurs (pg.4, ln.17-37 and fig.1). The primary slot machine 10 is required for playing a base game and determining if the bonus qualifying event occurs. The secondary slot machine 20 is required for playing the bonus game. It is impossible to play the bonus game on the primary slot machine 10 only or to play the base game on the secondary slot machine 20 only in the method taught by Vancura (US 6,033,307).

The present application discloses a method for operating the coin actuated entertainment automat where for playing a game is used one coin actuated entertainment automat or several coin actuated entertainment automats connected into a communication network. There is no primary or secondary automats in the method taught by present invention and a base game and a supplemental game can be played and are being played on each coin actuated entertainment automat disposed in the communication network. The combining the communication network of the coin actuated entertainment automats is performed through a communications board 20 where an individual address number is defined for each coin actuated entertainment automat. The coin actuated entertainment automat with a master function in the communication network is determined. The master function consist in controlling the functioning of the communication network (pg.2, ln.48 through pg.3, ln.48). There is not difference between the coin actuated entertainment automats in the communication network; any of them can be with either the master function or a slave function. In contrast to the method taught by Vancura (US 6,033,307) where the base game is held on the primary slot machine and the bonus game is held on the secondary slot machine in the method of the present invention the base game and the supplemental game are played on the coin actuated entertainment automat with the master function and on the coin actuated entertainment automats with the slave function. It is evident from above mentioned that the coin actuated entertainment automat with the master function of the present invention is not the same as the primary slot machine 10 of Vancura (US 6,033,307) and the coin actuated entertainment automat with the slave

function of the present invention is not the same as the secondary slot machine 20 of Vancura (US 6,033,307). The present invention teaches method where it is not necessary to have two separate gaming machines for playing the base and supplemental games as it is required in the teachings of Vancura (US 6,033,307).

The Office Action refers to Claims 1, 3 & 7:

Vancura teaches:

- that the primary machine acts as a traditional slot machine (col. 18, lines 22-24).
- that the primary gaming machine can be a suitable gaming machine, such as, slot, poker, keno etc.,

and

- the accumulating of winnings in an award meter (col. 17, lines 44-54).

The Office Action aligns a number of elements of the Vancura reference and attempts thereby to show that the claims of the applicants are anticipated. This does not appear to be a permissible procedure. It is submitted that is should be shown for anticipation that Vancura teaches the same sequence of steps which is recited in the respective claims of the applicants.

Vancura (US 6,033,307) teaches a method for playing a bonus game in a secondary slot machine 20 adjacent a primary slot machine 10. The primary slot machine 10 is required for playing a base game and determining if the bonus qualifying event occurs (pg.4, ln.17-37 and fig.1).

The present invention teaches a method for operating a coin actuated entertainment automat where both a base and a supplemental games are played on one coin actuated entertainment automat or several networked coin actuated entertainment automats (pg.2, ln.48 through pg.3, ln.48). In contrast to the teachings of Vancura (US 6,033,307) there are no any requirements to use two separate gaming machines for playing the base and supplemental games in the present invention. One of the essential differences between the primary slot machine 10 of the method taught by Vancura (US

6,033,307) and the coin actuated entertainment automat with a master function of the present invention consists in that that after passing a bonus qualifying signal to play the bonus game the primary slot machine 10 is not used for playing the bonus game. In the present invention the supplemental or bonus game is played on the coin actuated entertainment automat with the master function as well as on the coin actuated entertainment automat with a slave function.

Claim 1 requires: "substituting a symbol by another randomly determined symbol"; "renewing the symbols within a predetermined time window until a winning carrying symbol combination is reached". No such requirements were found in the reference to Vancura.

Claim 3 requires: "determining if a game time has ended"; "actualize the intermediate state"; "determining again if the game time has ended if the certain winning combination had not been reached". No such requirements were found in the reference to Vancura.

Claim 7 requires: "wherein the symbols can be renewed within a predetermined time window, until the winning carrying symbol combination is reached". No such a requirement was found in the reference to Vancura.

The Office Action refers to Claim 2 & 8:

Vancura teaches

- a secondary machine (claim 1);
- a bonus qualifying signal, to play a bonus game on the secondary machine, when a predetermined combination of symbols is obtain (col. 18, lines 24-28);
- determining the winning values and accumulating winnings in the specific winning machine (claim 1).

Vancura (US 6,033,307) teaches a method for playing a bonus game in a secondary slot machine 20 adjacent a primary slot machine 10. According to the

Vancura's teachings (US 6,033,307) the secondary slot machine 20 is required for playing the bonus game (pg.4, ln.17-37 and fig.1).

The present invention teaches a method for operating a coin actuated entertainment automat where both a base and a supplemental games are played on one coin actuated entertainment automat or several networked coin actuated entertainment automats (pg.2, ln.48 through pg.3, ln.48). In contrast to the teachings of Vancura (US 6,033,307) there are no any requirements to use two separate gaming machines for playing the base and supplemental games in the present invention.

Vancura (US 6,033,307) teaches a method for playing a bonus game in the secondary slot machine 20 where the primary slot machine 10 and the secondary slot machine 20 are separate gaming machines despite the fact that they may be installed in the same housing. The primary slot machine 10 communicates over communication path 30 to the secondary slot machine 20 when a bonus qualifying event occurs (pg.4, ln.17-37 and fig.1). The secondary slot machine 20 receives a bonus qualifying signal to play a bonus game on the secondary machine 20, when a predetermined combination of symbols is obtained on the primary slot machine 10.

In the present invention some bonus qualifying signal is one of signals which exist in the communication network between coin actuated entertainment automats connected into the network for playing the game (pg.3, ln.38 through pg.4, ln.30).

There was not found any mention of the specific winning machine for determining the winning values and accumulating winnings in the claim 1 of the Vancura's reference.

Claim 2 requires: "networking a second entertainment automat to the first entertainment automat"; "coordinating the winning value to that entertainment automat, which entertainment automat has reached the highest winning within the time limited game mode". No such requirements were found in the reference to Vancura.

Further claim 2 depends on claim 1 and claim 1 requires: "substituting a symbol by another randomly determined symbol"; "renewing the symbols within a predetermined time window until a winning carrying symbol combination is reached". No such requirements were found in the reference to Vancura.

Claim 8 requires: "the entertainment automats (1) are networked together"; "in the game mode is determined at which entertainment automat (1) the highest winning value is reached within a time window predetermined by the control unit (7)"; "the winning value is coordinated to that entertainment automat (1), which entertainment automat (1) has reached the highest winning within the time limited game mode". No such requirements were found in the reference to Vancura.

Further claim 8 depends on claim 7 and claim 7 requires: "wherein the symbols can be renewed within a predetermined time window, until the winning carrying symbol combination is reached". No such a requirement was found in the reference to Vancura.

The Office Action refers to Claim 4:

Vancura teaches:

- a bonus-qualifying event determined after the primary machine is activated (col. 3, lines 18-20 and col.4, lines 55-64).

Vancura (US 6,033,307) teaches a method for playing a bonus game in a secondary slot machine 20 adjacent a primary slot machine 10 where a bonus-qualifying event determined after the primary machine 10 is activated (col. 3, lines 18-20 and col.4, lines 55-64).

The present invention teaches a method for operating a coin actuated entertainment automat where a jackpot release value is determined after the coin actuated entertainment automat with a master function is activated and obtains the current information about credits state from each coin actuated entertainment automat that is activated and networked (pg.4, ln.23-28).

Claim 4 depends on claim 3 and claim 3 requires: "determining if a game time has ended"; "actualize the intermediate state"; "determining again if the game time has ended if the certain winning combination had not been reached". No such requirements were found in the reference to Vancura.

The Office Action refers to Claims 5 & 6:

Vancura teaches-

- a secondary machine (claim 1);
- the use a processor to facilitate all the functions of the primary (master) and secondary (slave) machines (see figure 50);
- a bonus/jackpot (claim 12);
- collecting the game results of the secondary machine in the primary machine (col. 16, lines 62-67);
- that the primary machine can be used as a slot, poker or keno machine (col. 5, lines 14-20).

Vancura (US 6,033,307) teaches a method for playing a bonus game in a secondary slot machine 20 adjacent a primary slot machine 10. According to the Vancura's teachings (US 6,033,307) the secondary slot machine 20 is required for playing the bonus game (pg.4, ln.17-37 and fig.1).

The present invention teaches a method for operating a coin actuated entertainment automat where both a base and a supplemental games are played on one coin actuated entertainment automat or several networked coin actuated entertainment automats (pg.2, ln.48 through pg.3, ln.48). In contrast to the teachings of Vancura (US 6,033,307) there are no any requirements to use two separate gaming machines for playing the base and supplemental games in the present invention.

The primary slot machine 10 of the Vancura's teachings can not be equated with the coin actuated entertainment automat with a master function of the present invention. One of the essential differences between the primary slot machine 10 of the method

taught by Vancura (US 6,033,307) and the coin actuated entertainment automat with the master function of the present invention consists in that that after passing a bonus qualifying signal to play the bonus game the primary slot machine 10 is not used for playing the bonus game. In the present invention the supplemental or bonus game is played on the coin actuated entertainment automat with the master function as well as on the coin actuated entertainment automat with a slave function.

Further, the secondary slot machine 20 of the Vancura's teachings can not be equated with the coin actuated entertainment automat with the slave function of the present invention. The essential difference between the secondary slot machine 20 of the method taught by Vancura (US 6,033,307) and the coin actuated entertainment automat with the slave function of the present invention consists in that that the secondary slot machine 20 is only used for playing the bonus game while the coin actuated entertainment automat with the slave function is used for playing both the base game and the supplemental game.

Vancura (US 6,033,307) teaches that a player who continually avoids the end of the bonus game and who reaches a certain count value of spins in the bonus game automatically receives an overall jackpot award (pg.3, ln.152-154 and pg.7, ln.31-42). The jackpot value is provided and is the same from game to game (claim 21).

In the present invention a jackpot release value is preset by giving a lower jackpot value and an upper jackpot value. The jackpot release value disposed between the lower preset jackpot value and in the upper preset jackpot value is determined with a random number generator of the control unit 7. Upon reaching or surpassing of the jackpot release value, the jackpot is frozen and a jackpot game playout sequence is started (pg.4, ln.17-22). The jackpot value is randomly determined depending on the state of the game credits.

From above mentioned it is evident that the method for determining the jackpot value, the function of the jackpot and the method for winning the jackpot award in the

present invention differ from those described in the method for playing taught by Vancura (US 6,033,307).

Claim 5 requires: "networking a second entertainment automat to the first entertainment automat"; "determining which one of the entertainment automats assumes a master function"; "determining which one of the entertainment automats assumes a slave function"; "waiting till the slave is ready"; "activating the game time for the entertainment automats". No such requirements were found in the reference to Vancura.

Further claim 5 depends on claim 3 and claim 3 requires: "determining if a game time has ended"; "actualize the intermediate state"; "determining again if the game time has ended if the certain winning combination had not been reached". No such requirements were found in the reference to Vancura.

Claim 6 requires: "sending a readiness signal to the master entertainment automat". No such a requirement was found in the reference to Vancura.

Further claim 6 depends on claim 5 and claim 5 requires: "networking a second entertainment automat to the first entertainment automat"; "determining which one of the entertainment automats assumes a master function"; "determining which one of the entertainment automats assumes a slave function"; "waiting till the slave is ready"; "activating the game time for the entertainment automats". No such requirements were found in the reference to Vancura.

The teachings of Vancura (US 6,033,307) do not lead a person of ordinary skill in the art to the present invention. A person of ordinary skill in the art is necessarily led away from the present invention method based on the teachings of Vancura (US 6,033,307), because it is impossible to substitute the game on several separate networked coin activated entertainment automats with the game on the single slot machine consisting of two slot machines - the primary slot machine and the secondary slot machine.

In conclusion the Vancura (US 6,033,307) reference does neither anticipate nor render obvious the present invention. Vancura (US 6,033,307) teaches a method for playing a bonus game (claim 1) on a separate machine.

The present invention teaches a method for operating a coin actuated entertainment automat (claim 1).

The Office Action also recites United States Patent 5,386,995 as a reference. This reference refers to a coin transport system. A central coin supply delivers coins with this coin transport system to each slot machine and in addition coins are automatically transported from each slot machine automatically to the central coin supply.

The US Patent 5,428,528 represents a networking of Game Boy, which are not coin operated machines, wherein the Game Boy machines can grant a jackpot system or a bonus game system.

The US Patent 4,837,728 teaches a sequencing of slot machines, wherein all slot machines employ commonly a single display.

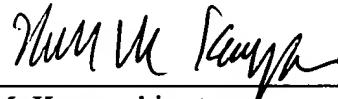
The US Patent 5,116,055 teaches a jackpot system, wherein a plurality of different slot machines are connected to the jackpot system. A different stake is employed from each slot machine for filling the jackpot.

Entry of the present amendment is respectfully requested. All claims as presently submitted are deemed to be in form for allowance and an early notice of allowance is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Gauselmann

By: _____



Horst M. Kasper, his attorney
13 Forest Drive, Warren, N.J. 07059
Tel. (908)757-2839; Reg.No. 28559

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MARKED-UP VERSION OF AMENDED PARAGRAPH

Page 7, first paragraph

Figure 4 is a view of a [driagram] diagram showing a flow diagram for determining a winning value in a supplemental game,

MARKED-UP VERSION OF AMENDED PARAGRAPH

Page 9 , second paragraph

The control circuit 7 comprises a communications board 20 in addition to a microcomputer 8. The display means 21 of a jackpot and a data exchange and data balancing of the entertainment automat 1 disposed in the communications network are [controleld] controlled by the communications board 20. In addition, the microcomputer 8 includes a serial interface not illustrated. A connection is furnished to the communications board 20 with the serial interface (TTL-level). The serial interface is formed as an RS 232 interface.

MARKED-UP VERSION OF AMENDED PARAGRAPH

Page 11, second paragraph

The combining of the entertainment automats 1 and the communications of the entertainment automats 1 is performed through the respective communications board 20. Each communications board 20 carries an individual address number, which is once set through a rotary switch. After switching on of the entertainment automat 1 the automatic recognition is performed determining this entertainment automat 1 performed the master function ~~for~~ the slave function. After the switching on, each one of the entertainment automats 1 the automatic recognition is performed as to which entertainment automat assumes the master function or the slave function. [Ater] After turning on, the entertainment automats wait for a time period of three seconds + (50 milliseconds times individual address number) for a recognition signal of the master. Since at this point in time no entertainment automat 1 has assumed the master function, the recognition signal does not appear. In this case the communications board 20 sends after an additional two seconds a master function assumption signal. According to the above recited time calculation, the entertainment automat 1 with the lowest address number will send this signal first and assumes the master function. The remaining communications board 20 will confirm the receipt of this signal and will behave as slaves in the communications network. The data are actualized, that is the master calls for the data from each individual slave, accumulates the total sum and delivers the data back to the slaves through the communications network every (30 milliseconds times entertainment automat number in the communications network) such that each communications board 20 contains the same data contents. Each slave can assume the master function in case of a failing function of the master thereby. Such a compound offers the advantage of multimaster capabilities. Each communications board 20 contains its own central processing unit CPU 22 with the communications software and all data relevant for the control of the compound and the communications board 20 can therefore assume both the function of the master as well as

the function of a slave. Based on this feature it is assured that even upon failure of a master at each time the valid state of data and the overall functioning of the system remains intact with the exception of the original master.

MARKED-UP VERSION OF THE AMENDED CLAIMS

1. (twice amended) A method for operating a coin actuated [operated] entertainment automat comprising
placing a coin into a coin acceptance device of an entertainment automat;
testing the coin in a coin testing device;
displaying symbols on a symbol display device, wherein a displayed symbol combination comprises several symbols and wherein upon reaching of a predetermined symbol combination or upon reaching of a predetermined credit balance in a credit balance counter disposed on the side of the control unit in the following a symbol combination is displayed with the symbol display device;
controlling the course of the game with a control unit including a microcomputer and a pseudorandom number generator;
influencing the course of the game by an operational element disposed on the front side of the entertainment automat;
substituting a symbol by another randomly determined symbol;
renewing the symbols within a predetermined time window until a winning carrying symbol combination is reached; and
accumulating the obtained winning in a credit balance counter.

3. (three times amended) A method for operating a coin actuated [operated] entertainment automat comprising
inserting payment into an automatic entertainment automat;

activating a game time after receiving the payment by the automatic entertainment machine;

randomly drawing all cards;

determining if a game time has ended;

displaying the winning values in case the game time has ended;

determining if a key has been depressed in case the game time has not yet ended;

determining if the depressed key is a hand out key or a hold key in case a key had been depressed;

randomly drawing cards not being held in case the hand out key had been depressed;

holding cards in case the hold key had been depressed;

actualize the intermediate state;

determining if a certain winning combination had been reached;

randomly drawing again all cards if the certain winning combination had been reached;

determining again if the game time has ended if the certain winning combination had not been reached.

4. (amended) The method for operating a coin actuated [operated] entertainment automat according to claim 3 further comprising

determining if a special symbol combination or a jackpot winning value has been reached after inserting payment into the automatic entertainment automat.

5. (amended) The method for operating a coin actuated [operated] entertainment automat according to claim 3 further comprising

networking a second entertainment automat to the first entertainment automat;

determining which one of the entertainment automats assumes a master function;

determining which one of the entertainment automats assumes a slave function;

determining if a jackpot filling level has reached a predetermined release amount;

starting a jackpot game at the entertainment automat performing the slave function;
waiting till the slave is ready;
activating the game time for the entertainment automats;
randomly drawing all cards;
determining if a game time has ended;
collecting the game results of the slave entertainment automat in the master entertainment automat;
distributing of the game results to the slave entertainment automat by the master entertainment automat;
calculating of the winning amount;
displaying the winning amount.

6. (amended) The method for operating a coin actuated [operated] entertainment automat according to claim 5 further comprising
sending a readiness signal to the master entertainment automat;
waiting by the slave entertainment automat for an activation of the game time through the master entertainment automat.

7. (amended) A method for operating a coin actuated [operated] entertainment automat with a coin acceptance device and a coin test device, a symbol display device and a control unit for controlling the course of the game, wherein the control unit includes a microcomputer and a pseudorandom number generator, wherein the game course can be influenced by an operational element disposed on the front side of the entertainment automat, and wherein a displayed symbol combination comprises several symbols, and wherein a symbol can be substituted by another randomly determined symbol,
wherein upon reaching of a predetermined symbol combination or upon reaching of a predetermined credit balance in a credit balance counter disposed on the side of the

control unit in the following a symbol combination is displayed with the symbol display device (2), and wherein the symbols can be renewed within a predetermined time window, until the winning carrying symbol combination is reached, and wherein the obtained winning is accumulated in the credit balance counter.

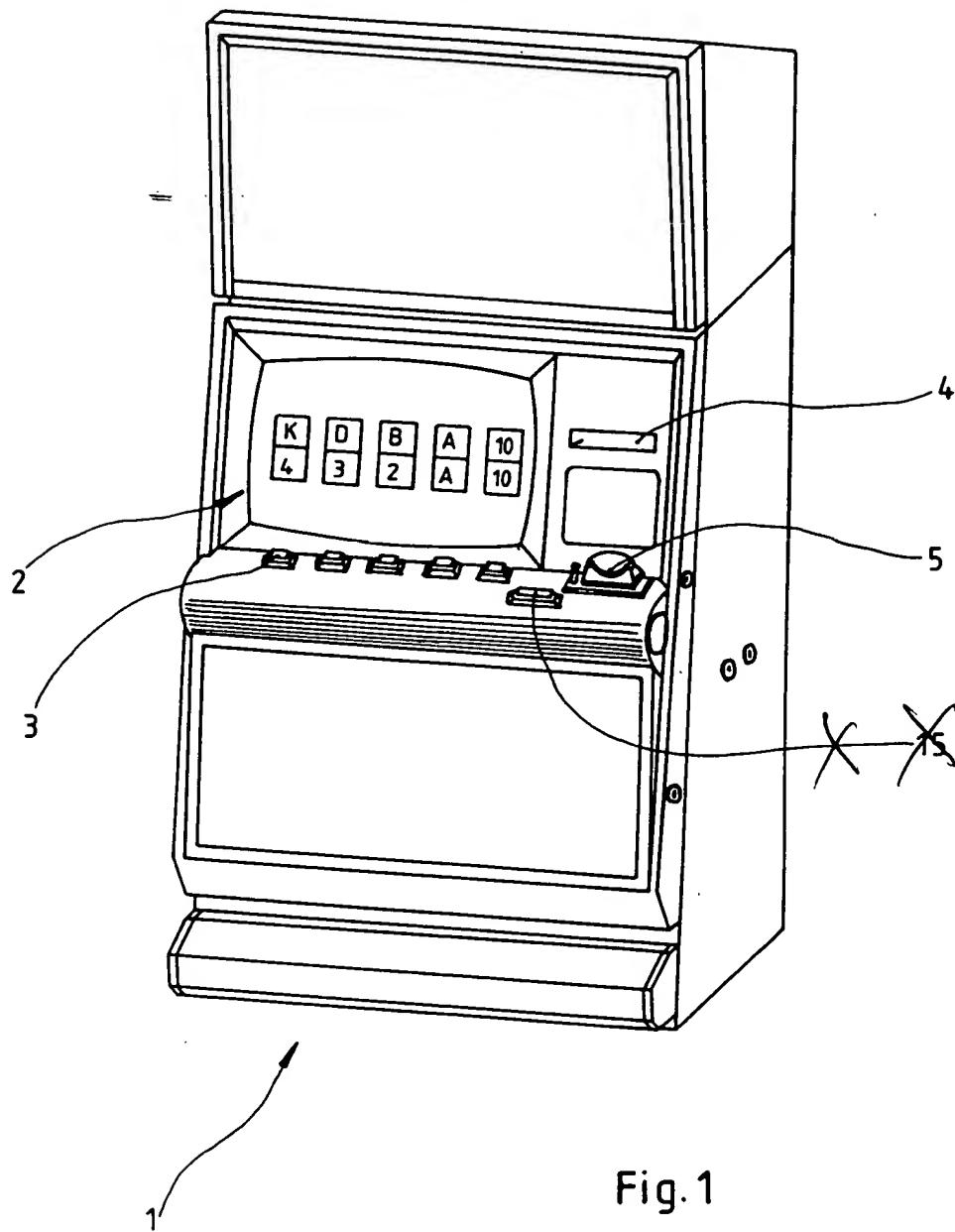


Fig. 1

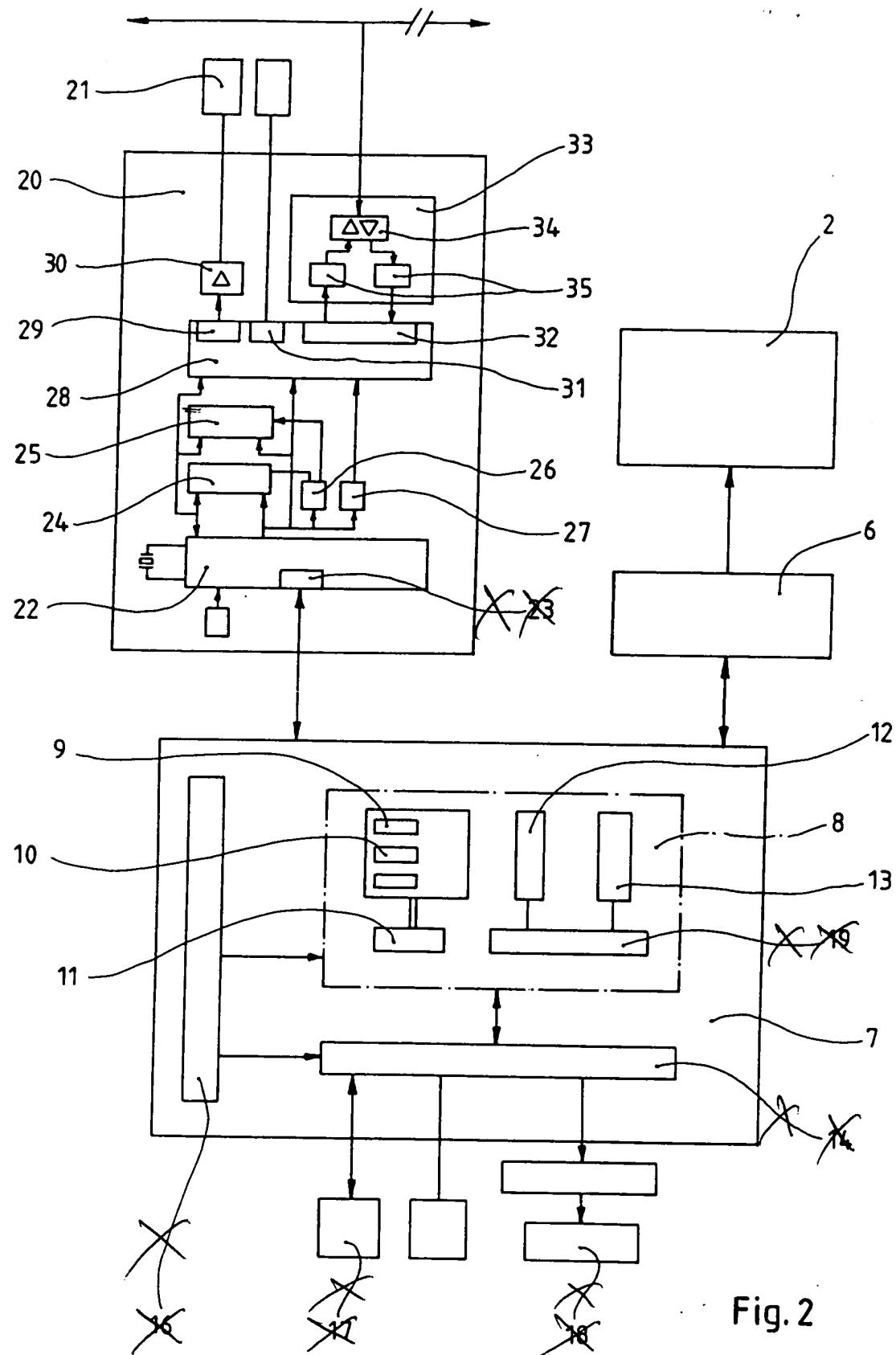


Fig. 2